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Port of Boston  
**Economic  
Development  
Plan**

*A Call to Action*



## A Call To

# Action

**A history of innovation and investment.** Bostonians always have drawn sustenance from the sea. The Port of Boston's shipping, fishing and shipbuilding industries have brought prosperity to Massachusetts for over 300 years. Time and again Boston's seafarers took the risks and made the innovations that kept us ahead of rival ports—plying the China trade in the 18th century, building the world's fastest sailing ships in the 19th, supplying seafood to far-flung national markets in the 20th. And throughout our history these private entrepreneurs joined with government to make extraordinary investments that continually reinvented the Port. From Long Wharf and the Naval Shipyard, to the Boston Fish Pier and the modern container terminals, these private and public investments have kept the region's economy moving and provided thousands of good jobs.

**Today's vibrant Port.** Today, the Port of Boston continues to support our economy, handling more than \$8 billion worth of goods flowing in and out of New England. Its industries employ over 9,000 people. It boasts extraordinary commerce: the world's largest cruise vessels; giant oil tankers and container ships; sailboats, tugboats, and water taxis; fishing boats bringing cod from the ocean and hauling lobsters from the harbor depths. Thousands of tons of food, computers, gasoline and other essentials pass over its docks every day.

The maritime economy provides good-paying industrial jobs to Bostonians at all skill and educational levels. It also supports the industries and consumers of the Boston region, affecting the region's economic competitiveness in terms of the cost of doing business and the price of consumer goods. Virtually everyone who drives a car in Boston is dependent on the Port of Boston and its safe delivery of gasoline. Boston's hotels and restaurants depend on the Port for the fresh seafood that is our signature cuisine. Hundreds of manufacturing firms, employing tens of thousands of people, depend on the Port for imports and exports of goods and materials.



**Building tomorrow's vision.** Starting now, we believe the Port of Boston can be an even more powerful driver of our economy. One year ago, Governor William Weld and Mayor Thomas Menino acted on that belief. They asked the Massachusetts Port Authority and the Boston Redevelopment Authority/Economic Development Industrial Corporation to join forces in analyzing the Port and creating a vision and action plan for its future. After consulting with industry and community leaders, with national experts and with neighborhood residents, we have concluded that the Port has extraordinary strengths and potential.

Changing markets, industries and modes of transportation are creating a demand and an opportunity for the Port to reinvent itself once again. Shifting global shipping routes offer an exciting opening to recapture the Asian trade Boston dominated long ago. A cleaner harbor and creative development can spur growth in tourism that builds on and complements the working port. New highway and airport connections will allow port industries to dramatically increase efficiency and market share.

**How far we've come.** Over the past year, State and City officials have worked together with industry and community representatives to lay the groundwork for this renaissance. Together with seafood businesses, we created a home for this industry's short-term viability and long-term growth. Working with several cultural institutions, we established a water ferry linking Boston's major waterfront visitor attractions. And we reached agreement with the Legislature to fund major investments in the Port's future. These include dredging the harbor and establishing efficient rail service to inland markets.

**What we still need to do.** With the release of this Plan, State and City government together with industry are setting forth a collective vision of how the Port of Boston can reinvent itself once again. It can capture new markets, set new standards, and make the innovations that put Boston ahead of the competition.

We have helped set the stage to achieve this. But the hardest work remains: implementing the vision. The status quo will need to be shaken. Extraordinary responsibilities will need to be shouldered. Aggressive, entrepreneurial risks will need to be taken.

**Why we need to do it.** Government, industry, and community will share in this work. But they will share in the benefits as well: the strengthening of Boston's industrial base, the expansion of the region's world trade, and the creation of new, good-paying jobs.

**Today is the culmination of a year's work in creating a vision for the Port's future. But more important, it is the first step in achieving that vision.**

**Today is a Call to Action.**



South Boston Seaport

## The Future Port of

# Boston

**The achievable Vision for the Port of Boston is captured in the growth of the private maritime economy in all its aspects: from shipping, to seafood, to tourism and beyond.**

The Vision includes a cargo terminal that handles the world's largest container ships, making the first call on America's east coast directly from southeast Asia and Europe, and the last call on the return journey. This service gives Massachusetts manufacturers a competitive edge in delivering products just-in-time to worldwide markets—



Charlestown Seaport

perhaps several days' advantage over rivals in the southeast U.S. or west coast. This service also provides Bostonians jobs handling thousands of containers being shipped to and from the midwest through Boston on doublestack rail lines.

The Vision includes dedicated port facilities designed for automobile import and export, for bulk cargoes, for other specialized products... facilities whose efficiency wins business away from rival ports.

The Vision includes over 100 cruise ship visits to the Port every year, with three vessels calling Boston their home port, bringing tourists and purchasing large quantities of food, fuel and other goods from local businesses. In addition to the existing Black Falcon Cruise Terminal, a new berth will be established where visiting ships can be seen from downtown Boston to increase the industry's visibility.



Boston Fish Pier-Northern Avenue

The Vision includes a full complement of maritime support industries, with tugboats, pilots, boat repair and other services clustered in modern facilities on the East Boston waterfront, and full-service large ship repair keeping hundreds employed in the South Boston dry docks.

The Vision includes a new district for modern seafood processing and distribution facilities, a short drive from Logan Airport and linked to a state-of-the-art seafood auction, fishing vessel berths and a retail fish and produce market on the nearby Boston Fish Pier. Together, these businesses and facilities will constitute the most efficient, most competitive and largest seafood center in the nation.





East Boston Waterfront Commercial District

The Vision includes a full-water transportation system linking key points in the harbor, decreasing commuting time for neighborhood residents and providing an exciting way for visitors to see Boston and its cultural institutions. It includes a Maritime Museum and a schooner pier, perhaps in East Boston, celebrating the city's great maritime heritage of trade, shipbuilding and immigration. It includes an expanded Harborwalk bringing the public closer to the working port.

The Vision includes many other elements that will strengthen the Port's industries. Some will be very visible, such as a rebuilt Chelsea Street Bridge that will dramatically improve the delivery of petroleum products to the region. Others, like an expanded Foreign Trade Zone, will be invisible but have a significant positive impact on the regional economy.

# A Strategy for Implementation

## Harborwide

1. Dredge Boston Harbor, the Reserved Channel and Mystic River to 40 feet, Conley Terminal berths to 45 feet, and Chelsea Creek to 38 feet to handle the next generation of oceangoing ships.
2. Make Boston an intermodal gateway to inland North America with doublestack rail.
3. Implement Massport's Marine Terminal Optimization Program for more efficient and cost effective cargo handling.
4. Build a water transportation system that unites Boston's waterfront destinations.
5. Expand the pedestrian access system throughout the waterfront.
6. Create aquaculture reserve zones to build a new industry.
7. Preserve critical marine industrial areas of the working waterfront.

## South Boston

8. Maintain the preeminence of Boston's seafood industry by establishing a new Seafood District.
9. Consolidate all container handling operations at Conley Terminal and develop it into a world-class, highly competitive container port through upgrades and expansion.
10. Expand cruise ship activity through port improvements and marketing and provide additional docking locations accessible to downtown and Fort Point destinations.
11. Establish a transition district at the Boston Fish Pier and Wharf 8 along Northern Avenue that protects industrial port uses while integrating commercial and tourism activities. Develop a Fresh Seafood Market and enhance pedestrian access to the Fish Pier and waterfront.
12. Create a water transit terminal accessible to Northern Avenue at the World Trade Center/Boston Fish Pier to serve the inner harbor.
13. Give businesses a competitive advantage through an expanded Foreign Trade Zone.
14. Complete the Master Plan for the Marine Industrial Park over the next two months.
15. Promote the Port and its industries at the Exchange Building Presentation Center.



## Charlestown

16. Create Boston Autoport, a dedicated, 21st-century facility for automobile handling at Moran Terminal and the Mystic Piers.
17. Give Boston Autoport a competitive advantage with a Foreign Trade Zone designation.
18. Create the Medford Street Terminal for bulk cargo handling.
19. Maintain on-dock rail access as a critical component of Boston Autoport and other maritime activity.
20. Expand pedestrian access system to link residential areas to industrial areas and provide safe viewing areas overlooking the port.

## East Boston

21. Create a Maritime District from Central Square to Porzio Park that would host a maritime museum, historic vessels and schooner charters as well as marine service businesses and other commercial and mixed uses.
22. Support marine service businesses at the East Boston Piers with a particular focus on a Marine Service Center at Pier 1.
23. Facilitate the Conrail Corridor green space connection.
24. Strengthen the waterfront commercial district at Central Square.
25. Dredge Chelsea Creek to 38 feet to maintain deep draft access.
26. Rebuild Chelsea Street Bridge to improve navigation and safety in Chelsea Creek and to improve connecting landside access.



Achieving the

# Vision

achieving this vision requires land, infrastructure, private and public investment, ... commitment

**Land.** The Maritime economy has a unique set of locational requirements. Obviously, it must locate where land joins water. But the industries also need deep draft channels adjacent to piers or bulkheads, sufficient land area for operations, and good access to non-water modes of transportation: highway, air and rail. There are relatively few land parcels in the Port of Boston with these characteristics; the Plan identifies them and ensures that they be targeted for maritime industrial uses. Since the majority of this land is in Massport or City of Boston ownership, this represents a major commitment on the part of government to sustaining and growing the maritime economy.



**Infrastructure.** Boston enjoys a rich legacy of enormous port investment from earlier generations. This infrastructure enables Boston to function as a major, full-service port. Again and again the Port has been literally rebuilt, with miles of bulkheads, piers, and rail lines, huge drydocks and warehouses, and deep shipping channels. Hundreds of acres of backlands were created by filling tidal flats. Because of its tremendous cost, most of this investment could never be duplicated today. As the inheritors and stewards of this infrastructure, we must match the optimistic vision of our forebearers and continue to reinvent the Port through strategic investment.

**Investment.** Massport and the City of Boston have in recent years invested over \$100 million in today's maritime and support facilities. In the past five years alone, Massport has upgraded Conley terminal's cranes, berths, and backlands to handle the latest generation of cargo ships, at a cost of \$50 million, and has made other investments in the working port totaling several million more dollars. In just the last five years the City of Boston has invested approximately \$15 million at the Marine Industrial Park to reconstruct piers, berths and roads,

make water and sewer upgrades, stabilize wharves and make improvements to rail lines, drydocks and buildings. Massport and the City make continual, significant investment at such facilities as East Boston Pier One, the Marine Industrial Park, Conley and Moran Terminals, and the Boston Fish Pier to overcome the ravages of climate and sea, maintain good working conditions for maritime industrial tenants, and improve the competitiveness of port industries.

The private sector, too, has invested significantly in the port. The Boston Fish Pier, for example, was built privately in the early years of this century by a group of forward-thinking industry leaders. Private investment has continued in the form of new seafood processing facilities, boatyards and ship repair yards, petroleum offloading and storage facilities, and other industrial infrastructure.

Continued substantial public and private investment is necessary to achieve the Vision for the Port, including establishing doublestack rail service, dredging Boston's ship channels, improving container terminal facilities, constructing new seafood facilities, rebuilding the Chelsea Street Bridge, and creating the new Autoport. Most of the steps to implement the Vision will be successful only if the public and private sectors will join together to share costs, risks and benefits.

**C o m m i t m e n t.** Achieving a vision requires holding and demonstrating to the world the commitment that it will be achieved. The Weld and Menino Administrations are demonstrating their commitment in the creation of this Vision and in the dedication of money, land, professional resources and regulatory clout. The Legislature has now demonstrated its commitment in the passage of a \$280 million Seaport Bond bill.

Now there is an opportunity for business, labor, and the port communities to prosper together by joining forces to achieve this Vision. Only through a willingness to embrace change together can we reinvent and reinvigorate the Port of Boston.

**Only by sharing this Vision, and by holding to and acting on our commitment, can we make the Port of Boston 21st Century Ready.**



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

William Weld, Governor

Paul Cellucci, Lieutenant Governor



Stephen P. Tocco, Executive Director & CEO  
Massachusetts Port Authority



**City of Boston**

Thomas M. Menino, Mayor

Marisa Lago, Chief Economic  
Development Officer

**Project Directors**

Linda Haar  
Director of Planning  
Boston Redevelopment Authority/  
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Industrial Corporation

Ralph Cox  
Maritime Director  
Massachusetts Port Authority